

ADULT EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

ACTION
Agenda Item F-1
November 13, 2000

Recommendation:

- The staff recommends that the Council approve in concept An Agenda for Adult Education in Kentucky (Attachment A). This will meet the directive of Senate Bill 1, which is to establish a statewide mission for adult education and to develop a 20-year strategy in partnership with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy.
- The staff recommends that the Council approve the Adult Education Action Plan (Attachment B), authorizing the release of the designated portion of the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2000-01.
- The staff recommends that the Council authorize the staff to implement the Adult Education Action Plan (Attachment B).

Background:

The Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey reports that 1 million Kentuckians, age 16 to 65, function at low levels of literacy. This represents approximately 40 percent of the state's workforce. State and federal funds administered by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy served 51,000 people in FY 99-00, about 5 percent of the target population. Senate Bill 1 calls for a multi-faceted strategy to improve significantly the knowledge and skills of Kentucky's citizens and to improve the health and well being of Kentucky's families and communities.

A general fund appropriation of \$7 million in fiscal year 2000-01 and \$12 million in fiscal year 2001-02 was made to the Council's Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund to finance the various mandates, initiatives, and activities set forth in Senate Bill 1. The Council approved a Preliminary Action Plan at the July 17, 2000, meeting with the directive that the staff develop an Adult Education Action Plan allocating the Trust Fund according to two criteria: a) all investments should be scalable, that is, capable of expanding to increase the number of participants in adult education programs; and b) all investments should help to build community adult education capacity. This Adult Education Action Plan has been developed accordingly.

In creating this action plan, the Council staff has consulted and collaborated with approximately 20 agencies, organizations, and institutions. This plan is shaped on the premise that all initiatives should be assessable, accountable, and avoid duplication of services to leverage and maximize resources.

Attachment A

An Agenda for Adult Education in Kentucky

The Vision

In the year 2020, we envision a community-focused adult education system in which:

- Communities embrace life-long learning, and take responsibility for meeting their own learning needs.
- Public and private partnerships help communities to meet education goals.
- Resources for life-long learning are available for everyone.
- Pathways to educational advancement are clear and achievable.
- Attainment of educational goals is recognized and rewarded.
- Adult educators are devoted to meeting the needs of a diverse learner community and are well equipped with varied techniques.
- Literacy goals are achieved efficiently through partnerships and collaboration.
- Adult education is available, accessible, affordable, and accountable.

In accomplishing this vision, Kentucky will be a Commonwealth in which:

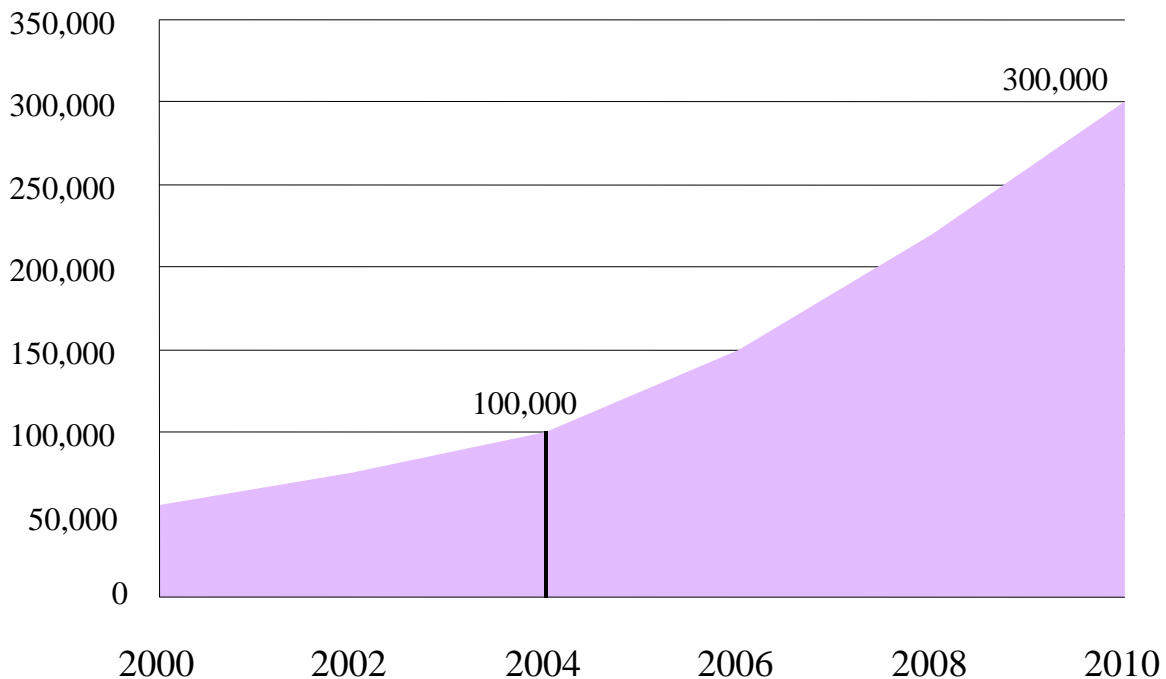
- A culture of learning is valued in the family and in the workplace.
- Children are successful in school and advance through the system.
- The workforce is well trained, knowledgeable, and confident.
- Citizens are knowledgeable about their health and well being.

Kentucky will become more literate and economically viable as more adults are actively engaged in life-long learning. We will increase the proportion of Kentuckians served in adult education programs from 5 percent of those needing help (50,000 learners) to 30 percent (300,000 learners) by achieving the following (see graph on the following page):

- Year 2000-01: 6 percent or 60,000 people
- Year 2001-02: 7.5 percent, or 75,000 people
- Year 2002-03: 9 percent, or 90,000 people
- Year 2003-04: 10 percent, or 100,000 people
- Year 2010: 30 percent of the target population, or 300,000 people

Adult education will focus on family literacy and workplace learning. We will concentrate on helping people learn basic skills so they can help their children succeed in school, do their jobs, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Enrollment Goals in Adult Education and Literacy



The Call for Change

Kentucky's need for more and better adult education is urgent. Nearly 1 million adults, 40 percent of the 2.4 million in the workforce, read poorly if at all. Yet only 51,000 of these citizens are in literacy and skills improvement programs.

Kentucky ranks last in the nation in the percentage of adults with a high school diploma. In 1990, 31 Kentucky counties reported that at least 52 percent of the population age 25 and older did not have a high school education. In 25 percent of the counties, the proportion of the adult population with eight years of education or less exceeded 35 percent.

Without a high school diploma, the chance of obtaining adequate employment in Kentucky is steadily decreasing. Approximately 90 percent of the adults in literacy levels 1 and 2 are working, yet they find it difficult to compete for good jobs at good wages or to participate in workplace training to maintain or improve their skills. As the job market tightens, employers become reluctant to expand or relocate in Kentucky, fearing a shortage of trainable employees.

Too few Kentuckians prepare for and enter college. Once they enroll, too few stay and graduate. Of 20 students who enter the ninth grade, only 14 finish high school. Of those, only half go to college, and only three of those enrolled in public universities earn

degrees within six years. Nearly 80,000 more undergraduates are needed – a 50 percent increase – for Kentucky to reach the national average in college going.

The disease of adult illiteracy is at the base of every major challenge facing Kentucky. It contributes to all other problems:

- Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational attainment of their parents, especially their mothers. The annual Kids Count survey of the condition of children in each state ranks Kentucky 40th.
- Prisoners have significantly lower literacy skills than the general population.
- Welfare recipients require literacy and education skills to be self-sufficient.
- Individuals functioning at the lowest levels of literacy are least likely to vote and participate in civic activities.

There is a strong relationship between Kentucky's low educational attainment and the Commonwealth's comparatively low per capita income. About 82 percent of the difference between Kentucky's per capita income and the average of other states' per capita income is due to educational deficiencies.

To improve the quality of life for all Kentuckians, adults have to be persuaded to overcome barriers to becoming life-long learners. The cycle of low educational expectations has to be broken. Kentucky can afford no less.

The Five Critical Questions

A galvanized effort by many partners representing government, business, education and volunteer organizations will be required to make the changes necessary. Each contributor should use the following five questions to guide the progress:

1. Are more Kentuckians participating in adult education programs?
2. Are these adult learners meeting their educational goals?
3. Are more adult learners advancing on to postsecondary education?
4. Are more adult learners being prepared for the continually changing workplace?
5. Are Kentucky's communities and economy benefiting?

Local, regional, and state economic and cultural assets have to converge to reduce illiteracy. There should be a fundamental shift from state-driven programs to locally driven initiatives tailored to the needs of each community. This powerful combination of state capacity and local resources can propel us toward a more literate Commonwealth.

The Leadership Challenge

Success requires leadership at all levels.

Effective partnerships of public, private, statewide, and local organizations will be necessary to meet this daunting challenge. Centralized support and resources emphasizing responsible local initiatives and opportunities will provide a flexible delivery system to meet diverse needs. For its part, the Council on Postsecondary

Education is charged with establishing an effective and efficient approach while drawing upon rich resources of adult education in Kentucky. The Department of Adult Education and Literacy is charged with implementing that approach, using and fostering collaborations among employers, educational agencies and institutions, local, state, and federal governments, the faith community, community-based organizations, and citizen volunteers.

Community leadership is especially critical. Communities can influence citizens to improve their individual lives, while making their communities better places to work and live. One of the greatest barriers to economic development in Kentucky is the absence of a literate workforce. The lack of literacy skills is interconnected with unemployment, poverty, welfare, crime, health, and substance abuse. When literacy becomes a community-wide commitment, a broad array of community resources can be mobilized to promote and support literacy training.

The call for action is clear. In meeting the requirements of Senate Bill 1, An Agenda for Adult Education in Kentucky offers a vision and a challenge for our Commonwealth and our communities to lead our citizens to a better economic and civic life. The need is great and the challenge is daunting. As we look to 2020, we will continually re-examine our goals, reassess our vision and strategy, redesign the programs as needed, and emphasize results-driven accountability.

Attachment B
Adult Education Action Plan
Fiscal Year 2000-2001

This proposed nine-point Adult Education Action Plan for 2000-2001 is the foundation for An Agenda for Adult Education in Kentucky, the 20-year statewide effort to improve and expand adult education in Kentucky as required in Senate Bill 1. The Council's acceptance of the plan will release the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund for fiscal year 2000-01. The Trust Fund totals \$7 million for fiscal year 2000-01, and \$12 million for fiscal year 2001-02. This plan calls for \$ 6.1 million. Unallocated funds will be carried forward to fiscal year 2001-2002.

The fund would be allocated according to the chart below. The Council approved up to \$1 million from the Trust Fund for the Public Communication Plan at the July 2000 meeting. No further funding is sought for this component at this time.

Plan Components:	2000-01 Allocation Requested:
1. Public Communication Plan	Up to \$ 1,000,000
2. New Opportunity Grants	Up to \$ 1,500,000
3. Economic Development and Workforce Training Matching Program	Up to \$ 500,000
4. Local Needs Assessment and Community Development	FY 2002
5. Professional Development	FY 2002
6. Statewide Information Technology and Distance Learning	Up to \$ 700,000
7. Tuition Discounts and Employer Tax Credits	Up to \$ 100,000
8. Statewide Competency-Based Certification for Workplace Skills	FY 2002
9. Base Funding, Performance, and Rewards	Up to \$ 2,300,000
Total Allocation Requested	\$ 6,100,000

1. Public Communication Plan

Up to \$1 Million (previously allocated)

Two groups are assisting with the development of a public communication campaign to promote life-long learning opportunities in Kentucky. An 18-member Oversight Committee is crafting a research-based communication strategy. The committee is working with the Office of the Governor to build on the work of the “Education Pays” campaign. Targeted messages will show how and why “education pays” for various segments of the adult audience. A community awareness effort will accompany the statewide media campaign to customize messages. Campaign strategies target not only individual change in attitude and behavior, but also change in the agenda of communities and employers to engage adult learners in a greater variety of programs.

Focus group research in metropolitan areas will be conducted to supplement existing rural area research (*Reasonable Choices: Understanding why Under-Educated Individuals Choose Not to Participate in Adult Education* by committee member Jane Jensen, UK College of Education). When complete, the communication strategy statement will define target audiences and messages to serve as the basis of a request for proposal to media vendors (planned for December 2000). The anticipated initial focus will be people who have recently left school and mid-career adults who need to upgrade their education and skills.

The Oversight Committee focuses on campaign design. Members are experienced in design, implementation, and assessment of multiple multi-million dollar national campaigns that effectively changed individual attitudes and community agendas on important public issues. The committee includes representatives from the Office of the Governor, the Cabinet for Workforce Development, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Long-Term Policy Research Center, the KCTCS, and Kentucky’s universities.

A second, more extensive group of Campaign Partners will identify local partnership opportunities, dissemination strategies, and in-kind support that will significantly expand the resources available to the campaign. The Partners include representatives from adult education programs, KET, local Workforce Investment Boards, the National Center for Family Literacy, and numerous state agencies and professional associations. The number of partners currently stands at 40 and recruitment is ongoing.

2. New Opportunity Grants

Up to \$ 1.5 Million

The purpose of the New Opportunity Grants is to fund model adult education programs that are replicable in other localities or serve as statewide delivery models. Successful proposals will meet the following criteria:

- Be scalable; projects should reach more Kentuckians affordably.
- Use instructional materials and service delivery strategies based on best practice and research-based models.
- Emphasize collaboration with other local, state, or private agencies.

- Include an adequate local assessment of the current challenge being addressed as well as budget and personnel necessary to meet that challenge.
- Include an adequate plan for the assessment of the program, focusing on the number of learners meeting their goals and on the ability to replicate the program in other Kentucky localities.

New Opportunity Grants are non-recurring with varying disbursal periods of 12 to 24 months.

A committee of representatives from DAEL, the Council staff, and experts from the public and private sectors will make recommendations for funding. Proposals will be sought immediately and funds will be available for distribution by January 2001.

3. Economic Development and Workforce Training Matching Program

Up to \$ 500,000

The purpose of the Economic Development and Workforce Training Matching Program is to stimulate workforce-focused partnerships among local, regional, and state agencies. The program will be guided by the Workforce Alliance, a collaborative committee representing the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Department for Adult Education and Literacy, the Department for Technical Education, the Cabinet for Workforce Development, the KCTCS, and the Economic Development Cabinet. Additional partners may be included in fiscal year 2001-02.

The Workforce Alliance will coordinate the workforce education and training services provided by Kentucky's public agencies. The purpose of the Alliance is to provide a responsive, coordinated system with the ability to leverage new and existing resources to maximize the number of adults and employers served. The Alliance's responsibilities include workplace distance learning, and establishing skill standards and assessment.

Leadership for the Workforce Alliance will be a Management Committee and a Steering Committee. The Management Committee will set policies and identify funding parameters for the Alliance. The Steering Committee will administer the policies and make recommendations to the management team. The Steering Committee will identify funding sources and opportunities for leveraging resources. Resources may include funds from a variety of state and state-administered federal programs.

Successful Economic Development and Workforce Training Matching Fund proposals submitted to the Alliance will meet the following criteria:

- Emphasize collaboration between state and local agencies and Kentucky business and industry employers.
- Include a well-developed assessment plan for reviewing local workforce challenges and clarify partnership roles, pre-match budgetary needs, and personnel needs.
- Include an adequate assessment method to determine program success.

4. Local Needs Assessment and Community Development

Funding is not requested for this component at this time. The elements of this plan are under development. A plan and funding recommendations will be presented at the Council's February meeting.

5. Professional Development

Funding recommendations for adult educators' professional development will be presented at the Council's May meeting. A team representing various state and local professional development experts is preparing a statewide comprehensive program.

6. Statewide Information Technology and Distance Learning Up to \$ 700,000

The Kentucky Virtual University will provide a centralized Web-based system that will improve access to adult literacy programs. Adult educators will be able to supplement their current instruction with Web-based applications rich in content and visual impact. These services will include:

- Licensing and hosting Web-based curriculum products, both instructor led and self-paced. These products will include assessment and testing components; be aligned to standardized tests and competency-based certifications; and include reading, writing, math, science, social studies, life skills, and work skills.
- The development, licensing, and distribution of an online reading literacy course. Special subject matter experts will create courses to address the developmental reading needs of adult learners and instructional needs of facilitators. It will also include online materials to help facilitators.
- Access to KYVU's instructional software, which supports threaded discussion forums, chatrooms, email and listserves, whiteboards, shared-browser software, and streaming audio and video.
- Access to more than 30 electronic databases, 4000 journals, and a dozen library catalogs. The Kentucky Virtual Library serves as the hub for libraries to share materials throughout the state. The KYVL Courier Service delivers print materials among 183 libraries. There are 1,500 participating libraries: eight public universities, 28 community and technical colleges, 19 private colleges and universities, 116 public libraries, 1,300 grade schools, and 21 special libraries.
- Electronic database devoted to adult educator and learner needs.
- On-line registration, call center, reference librarians, technical support, and record keeping. Funds will support expansion of the KYVU/VL call center to address the particular needs of adult learners, particularly those who need support at non-traditional times.
- An adult education Web site fully integrated into the KYVU and KYVL Web sites. A Web designer/programmer will create and maintain a Web site that uses a "high-tech/high-touch" experience.

In support of the implementation of the above services, the Council on Postsecondary Education Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund will provide for:

- An annual statewide license for on-line instructional curriculum; up to \$500,000.
- The first phase of an online reading literacy course; \$200,000.

The Department for Adult Education and Literacy will fund:

- Adult education call center support.
- A database applications programmer.
- A Web programmer/designer.

Partnership with KET will continue with “GED on TV” and Workplace Essential Skills video series programming. Efforts are underway to provide adult learners with access to the Kentucky Department of Education’s Virtual High School.

7. Tuition Discounts and Employer Tax Credits

Up to \$ 100,000

Senate Bill 1 requires that tuition discounts be provided to full-time employees who complete a high school equivalency diploma program within one year, and tax credits be given to businesses that assist their employees with this goal. The Cabinet for Workforce Development is submitting the regulations for the tuition discounts and employer tax credits to the Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee for approval. An allocation of \$100,000 is requested for tuition discounts sought in Fiscal Year 2000-2001. This account may increase substantially in future years.

8. Statewide Competency-Based Certification for Workplace Skills

The Council on Postsecondary Education, in partnership with the Cabinet for Workforce Development, the KCTCS, KDE, BellSouth, and EMPOWER Kentucky, is developing a competency-based workplace skills certification model that will help to develop and improve the skills of Kentucky’s workforce. This model will identify needed job skills and target additional training required for a high performance workforce. The model will also use the Employ Kentucky Operating System as a data bank. Finally, the model will help link secondary education to postsecondary and adult education. No allocation of funds is requested during this developmental stage.

9. Base Funding, Performance, and Rewards

Up to \$2.3 Million

This component contains four parts: foundation funding, performance measures, program performance, and rewards.

A. Foundation Funding

Up to \$1.8 Million

Senate Bill 1 requires services be targeted to communities with the greatest need based on the number of adults at literacy levels 1 and 2 as defined by the 1997 Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey. Historically, there has been a lack of data available reflecting individual county literacy levels. This issue has contributed to funding inequities across counties. In

response to this difficulty, a county-focused performance measures and key indicator system has been developed, as well as an online data system to collect and report data.

The objective of foundation funding for adult education and literacy is to ensure that every Kentucky citizen has access to quality adult education in their county of residence.

Each Kentucky county is entitled to a base funding level determined by formula. The formula is determined by multiplying a per learner cost by the total number of people residing in the county functioning at Literacy Levels 1 and 2. The per learner cost is calculated by the amount of state and federal funds awarded to the Department for Adult Education and Literacy minus required set aside programs and costs for administration, divided by 1,000,000 people in the target population.

Foundation funding will be achieved by increasing the allocation to the counties' base formula level (appendix 1). Counties allocated above the base will not lose funds. Additional funding required to bring the 64 less-funded counties to the base is approximately \$1,800,000. The Council on Postsecondary Education's Adult Education and Literacy Trust Funds for 2001-02 will be used for this purpose. The formula for the base foundation funds is effective July 1, 2001.

Foundation funding is allocated to county program providers through a request for proposal process, determined by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy. Providers must meet performance goals to qualify for and to maintain funding.

B. Performance Measures

Title II, Section 212, of the Workforce Investment Act requires a state adult education and literacy comprehensive performance accountability system. Kentucky piloted the development of the Performance Measurement, Reporting, and Improvement System in 1993, which led to the National Reporting System of 2000. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, approved Kentucky's State Plan in early 2000.

To measure the success of adult education and literacy programs, key indicators have been developed to address five critical questions:

Question 1. Are more Kentuckians participating in adult education programs?

Key indicator: The number of Kentuckians served in adult education programs will increase from 5 percent of the target population (50,000 learners) to 30 percent (300,000 learners) by achieving the following:

- Year 2000-01: 6 percent or 60,000 people
- Year 2001-02: 7.5 percent, or 75,000 people
- Year 2002-03: 9 percent, or 90,000 people
- Year 2003-04 : 10 percent, or 100,000 people
- Year 2010: 30 percent of the target population, or 300,000 people

Question 2. Are these adult learners meeting their educational goals?

Key Indicator: Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills, receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

Question 3. Are more adult learners advancing on to postsecondary education?

Key Indicator: Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education.

Question 4. Are more adult learners being prepared for the continually changing workplace?

Key Indicator: Participation in workplace specific training, unsubsidized employment, or career advancement.

Question 5. Are Kentucky's communities and economy benefiting?

Key Indicator: Employer and participant satisfaction surveys; labor market analysis.

Quantitative goals will be set for these indicators by late spring 2001.

C. Program Performance

County adult education and literacy providers must meet enrollment and performance goals based in the key indicators in Section B. Programs not meeting enrollment and performance goals will develop a Program Improvement Plan including specific timelines for achieving improvement goals. The Department for Adult Education and Literacy will coordinate all necessary technical assistance and approve the Program Improvement Plans. Failure to meet performance criteria may result in termination of contract.

D. Rewards

Up to \$500,000

Rewards are based on a percentage of a county's level of foundation funding. To qualify for a reward, county adult education programs must meet or exceed annual enrollment goals and a percentage of the key indicators of performance. If enrollment goals are met, programs are eligible for a reward based on achieving a percentage of performance goals as illustrated below.

Percentage (%) of Key Indicators Achieved	Reward (% of Foundation Fund Level)
50% - 59%	5%
60% - 69%	6%
70% - 79%	7%
80% - 89%	8%
90% - 99%	9%
100%	10%

The Council on Postsecondary Education's Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund will fund rewards. The Department for Adult Education and Literacy is responsible for maintaining the data collection system, and the coordination and implementation of the rewards. Estimated cost for the reward program for fiscal year 2000-01 is \$500,000.

Special programs such as family literacy, Jobs for America's Graduates, corrections, new opportunity grants, and workplace education are not available in every county. Therefore, these programs are not included in the reward program or in calculating rewards.

Staff Preparation by Cheryl D. King and Ben Boggs

Adult Education and Literacy

 Counties that are funded lower than the base - 1999-2000

